



Pacific Northwest Region
Umatilla National Forest
72510 Coyote Road
Pendleton, OR 97801
www.fs.usda.gov/umatilla

News Release

Contacts:

Joani Bosworth – Umatilla NF, 541-278-3722
Katy Gray – Umatilla NF, 541-278-3849

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Fall prescribed burning set to take place across Umatilla National Forest

Pendleton, OR: Fire management staff on the Umatilla National Forest are preparing for the fall prescribed burning, which may impact access and camping opportunities in several fall hunting units. Area, road and trail closures will go into effect prior to and during burn operations, which typically take 2-5 days. Forest officials are advising hunters to plan ahead and avoid camping in the following designated prescribed burn areas during this 2014 hunting season:

- The **Gulliford Burn** (located in the Heppner Hunting Unit in Oregon) encompasses 4,000 acres on the North Fork John Day Ranger District west of State Highway 395 between forest road 5308 and forest road 5314.
- The **Sunflower-Bacon Burn** (located in the Heppner Hunting Unit in Oregon) encompasses two areas of operation on the Heppner Ranger District. The first area is east of forest road 22 in the Lovelett Creek drainage and will cover 3,200 acres. The second area is in the Morphine Ridge area near forest road 2202 and 2120 and will cover 3,900 acres.
- The **Alder Creek Burn** (located in the Wenaha Hunting Unit in Oregon) covers 1,800 acres in the Lookout Mountain area east of forest road 62, south of forest road 62-340 and west of the Grande Ronde River on the Walla Walla Ranger District.



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- The **North Wenatchee Burn** (located in the Mountain View Hunting Unit in Washington) totals 4,300 acres on the Pomeroy Ranger District in the area north of Wenatchee Creek, south of forest roads 43, 44, and 4304 and east of Indian Tom Trail #3119.
- The **Little Butte Burn** (located in Lick Creek Hunting Unit in Washington) totals 900 acres on the Pomeroy Ranger District in the area west of forest road 4305 and 4305-087, north of Coombs Canyon and the north fork of Coombs Canyon and south of the Forest boundary.

Prescribed burning is highly dependent on precise weather and fuel conditions; fall weather provides optimal weather conditions and dry material. Burning could occur anytime from September through early November, which coincides with several big game hunting seasons.

Additional areas across the forest are also scheduled for fall prescribed burning, but will not involve large area closures. “It’s important to note that not all proposed burns planned for this fall may be completed since typical weather conditions provide limited burn windows,” said Chris Johnson, Deputy Fire Staff Officer.

Firefighters will ignite the burn perimeter by hand using drip torches. The interior of the burns will be aerial ignited, via helicopter, using a plastic sphere dispenser that drops ping-pong-like balls that catch fire as they reach the ground. For this reason, it is important that hunters avoid setting up camp within the designated burn perimeter.

“The safety of our firefighters and the public are top priority,” said Johnson. While closures may inconvenience hunters, the long-term reward is worth the short-term restrictions on forest use.

“Unfortunately, hunting season coincides with prescribed burning season. We understand this will impact hunters, but controlled burns are necessary to reintroduce fire to the landscape and encourage healthy vegetation that will ultimately improve landscapes and forage for big game,” added Lizzy Berkley, Forest Wildlife Biologist.

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Partnerships with the Blue Mountain Elk Initiative, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife provide funding and in-kind support for these prescribed burning projects. Additional information and maps of the proposed prescribed burns will be available on the Umatilla National Forest website www.fs.usda.gov/umatilla/ or at any forest office.

For more information concerning the Umatilla National Forest Prescribed Burning program, please contact Chris Johnson at (541) 278-3704 or one of the following Ranger District contacts:

Tara Mackleit	Pomeroy Ranger District	(509) 843-1891
Amber Mahoney	Walla Walla Ranger District	(509) 522-6026
Kelly Hedgepeth	North Fork John Day Ranger District	(541) 427-5357
Dale Boyd	Heppner Ranger District	(541) 676-9187

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